

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES**

1449 WEST TEMPLE STREET  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90026-5698

**Preliminary Assessment Summary**

CAD008383291

June 1984

Powerine Oil Company  
12354 Lakeland Road  
Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670

Preparer: Erich Linse *EL*  
Toxic Substances Control Division  
Southern California Section

**Problem and History:**

The site has been used for refinery purposes since the 1930's. Santa Fe Springs was once a major oil producing region. The oil fields are still active but production is less important than in the past. The Rothschild Oil Company bought the Powerine site, then a refinery, in 1936 from Bellevue Oil. Members of the Rothschild family were reported to still own Powerine. An Interim Status Document was issued April 6, 1981 to Powerine. This company filed for reorganization under Chapter 11 of the National Bankruptcy act on March 26, 1984.

**Problems:** In 1975, the Los Angeles County Air Pollution Control District responding to an odor complaint, identified the source of refinery related odors as sulfur compounds leached by rains from soil in an area of Powerine's tank farm. The ground on which the crude oil storage tanks are now situated was originally an area where refinery sludges and liquid wastes were dumped during early refinery operations. The California Handbook of Industrial Waste lists the following as components of oil, mud and water slurry (page 54): 18 ppm chromium, 35 ppm nickel, 11 ppm lead, 19 ppm vanadium, 2 ppm arsenic, 21 ppm selenium, 29 ppm phenol, and 58 ppm molybdenum. Powerine has an extensive recent history of repeated environmental problems. On May 25, 1982, Powerine discharged material that caused explosive conditions in the Florence Avenue trunk sewer. A few days earlier, Powerine discharged material that caused a major mercaptan odor problem (also with potentially explosive gasses) in the same sewer. In 1981, violations of oil, grease, and thiosulfate were reported. In 1983, the firm was cited for low pH discharge to the sewer (1.5 pH); for excess quantities of chlorine and other chemical disinfectants and discharge of excessive toxic materials. Several small fires at the refinery and many equipment breakdowns causing occasional venting of gasses, mists and particulates have occurred in the last few years. Although large amounts of money have reportedly been spent to meet environmental standards, it appears that the firm is limping along with old equipment, limited preventive maintenance or too small an operating staff (one third laidoff) or all three. Continued environmental problems should be expected. There appears to be a potential for serious problems here, perhaps a major fire.

Recommendation:

Deep soil sampling is needed to determine if hazardous wastes were included in the dumping of oil refinery sludge and liquid wastes. Surface sampling of any areas of bare ground is also recommended. Medium priority.

PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT  
Region 9

Preparer's Name Erich Linse Date 5/29/84

	SOURCE	INFORMATION
1. Site ID Number	Interim Status Document	CAD008383291
2. Site Name	Interim Status Document	Powerine Oil Company
3. Site Location	Interim Status Document	12354 Lakeland Road Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670
4. County	Interim Status Document	Los Angeles
5. Owner (Address & telephone no.)	Phone contact Janet Keen Powerine Oil (213) 944-6111	Harry R. Rothschild 12354 Lakeland Road Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670
6. Operator (Address & telephone no.)	Interim Status Document	Powerine Oil Company Harry R. Rothschild 12354 Lakeland Road Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670
7. Type of Ownership	Interim Status Document	Private
8. Status	John Lewis, RWQCB (213) 620-4460 5/18/84	Inactive
9. Source Activity	John Maloney SCAQMD 5/30/84 (818) 572-6214	Oil refinery sludges and liquid wastes.
10. Years of Operation	RWQCB	Unknown
11. Facility Type	April 3, 1975, letter from Air Pollution Control District County of L.A. (RWQCB)	38 acre refinery containing an old land farm and sump.
12. Waste Type and Description	April 3, 1975, letter from Air Pollution Control District County of L.A. (RWQCB)	Refinery sludges, liquid wastes, and sulfide bearing wastes.

13. Contacts Janet Keen and Walter Ziemba, Powerine Oil (213) 944-6111  
See Agency Contact Record.

14. Incidents 1) Explosive gas to sewer (5/25/82) 80% LEL, no explosion. Mercaptans to sewer (5/21/82). 2) Releasing sulfuric fumes during a 9 day period ending August 7, 1982. 3) Released oil into air, free car washes offered (11/81).  
On-site fires - 12/1/83 and 12/13/83.  
Fire and Explosion X Direct Contact

15. Inspections (date, type, by whom, recommendations)

- 5/21/82 - Sanitary Districts of Los Angeles County, oil and explosive gas, and mercaptan odor.  
5/25/82 - Sanitary Districts of Los Angeles County, stop flow of dispersed oil and explosive gases to sewer.  
2/15/84 - SCAQMD, flange failed, catalytic dust and mist fall-out on vehicles; free car washes offered by Powerine.

(More inspections in files.)

16. Enforcement History (list date, type of action, requirements, outcome)

- 5/26/82 - Violation notice no. 20719 for violation of LACSD Ordinance Section 406 M (220 mg/l of methyl mercaptan).  
4/8/81 - Violation notice - oil, grease, and thiosulfate.  
1/16/81 - Non-compliance industrial wastewater discharge.  
2/19/81

- 17.a. Initial recommendation for further action:

Because of common past oil industry practices and references by the Air Pollution Control District, County of Los Angeles, in 1975 to dumping refinery sludges and liquid wastes; surface soil and core samples are recommended.  
Moderate priority.

- 17.b. EPA recommendation for further action:

18. Response Termination:      No Further Action      Pending      Active

Justification:

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18. Response Termination:        No Further Action        Pending        Active

Justification:



## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

107 SOUTH BROADWAY, ROOM 7011  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012  
(213) 620-2380



NOV 15 1988

Mr. Don H. Baker III, esq.  
Coordinator - Environmental  
Affairs  
Powerine Oil Company  
P.O. Box 2108  
Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670

Dear Mr. Baker:

## 1988 BOND EXPENDITURE PLAN LISTING (REGION 3)

As you are aware, your facility is listed in the 1988 version of the Expenditure Plan as a hazardous waste site targeted for cleanup. Your facility is listed in Appendix 6 of the Expenditure Plan and has been designated as a Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB)-lead site. To prevent duplication of our efforts and to maximize use of limited resources, the Department will not be providing oversight of cleanup activities in conjunction with the RWQCB. If subsequent developments at your facility result in the need for action by the Department, we will allocate appropriate resources and provide you with notification. However, we will continue to provide oversight of corrective action associated with any current or future RCRA Unit(s) at your facility.

Based on this decision, it will not be necessary for you to continue to provide the Department with documentation of cleanup activities performed under the direction of the RWQCB. If you have any questions or comments, please contact me at the above phone number.

Sincerely,

Dennis A. Dickerson, Chief  
Region 3 (Los Angeles)  
Toxic Substances Control Division

cc: Robert P. Ghirelli  
Executive Officer  
Regional Water Quality  
Control Board -Region 4  
107 S. Broadway, Rm. 4027  
Los Angeles, CA 90012-4596